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THE LEBANON  
COUNTY HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

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SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING  
DECEMBER 18, 1914

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A Review of the Year's Work

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE  
HON. JOHN H. KINPORTS

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ADDRESS  
Historical Education and Historical Societies

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Vol. VI

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# Report of the Executive Committee

## A Review of the Year's Work

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By way of a review of the affairs of the Society during the year 1914, closing at this meeting, your Executive Committee begs to report that it held four meetings to consider and act for the interest of the Society. Five meetings were held by the Society, at which meetings besides the business transacted, the literary features were the reading of these Papers:

Frederick Stump, the Founder of Fredericksburg, by Dr. E. Grumbine.

Cooking Utensils and Cookery of our Grandmothers, by Mrs. J. Max Hark.

The Light of Other Days or Tallow Dips, Candle Sticks and Lamps, by Mrs. Mary L. Roedel.

Millbach History and Lore, by John M. Krall.

The Development of Interest in Historical Societies by Prof. H. H. Shenk.

The Society issued publications during the year as follows:

Vol. VI. No. 6, entitled: A History of Lebanon County," Pages 23.

Vol. VI. No. 7, entitled: Fifteenth Annual Meeting and Annual Dinner, Pages 48.

Vol. VI. No. 8, entitled: Moravian Influence in the Settlement and Early Development of Lebanon County, Pages 16.

Vol. VI. No. 9, entitled: Frederick Stump, the Founder of Fredericksburg, Pages 19.

Total number of pages, 106.

The addresses delivered at the Society's Annual Dinner, held Feb. 19, 1914, one on "The Centennaries of Nineteen Fourteen" another on "A Chester Countains Idea Of a County Historical Society, and a third on "The Lebanon Valley," appeared in No. 7, of Vol. VI, and with the Papers read, as above noted, constitute the Society's literary output during the year, namely, Five Papers and Three Addresses.

Accessions to the Society's Literary and Museum during the year aggregate about 120 pieces. Eight persons were the year aggregate about 120 pieces.

Eight persons were added to the membership of the Society during the year. The number in good standing at this time is 4 corresponding and 205 active members, or a total of 209. The total number of persons elected to active membership and who qualified, that is, paid their membership fees and annual dues once or oftener, is 305 since the Society was organized, Jan. 4, 1898. Of this number 39 have passed away by death and 104 have dropped out by resigning or by non-payment of dues, leaving the number of active members at this time at 205, as stated above.

Monies received per the Secretary during the year were as follows:

Membership fees: .....	\$ 8.00
Annual dues—for the year 1910: .....	\$ 2.00
Annual dues—for the year 1911: .....	3.00
Annual dues—for the year 1912: .....	12.00
Annual dues—for the year 1913: .....	34.00
Annual dues—for the year 1914: .....	145.00
Annual dues—for the year 1915: .....	1.00
Annual dues—for the year 1916: .....	1.00
Annual dues—for the year 1917: .....	1.00
	———— 199.00
Sales of publications .....	36.10
Total receipts .....	\$ 243.10

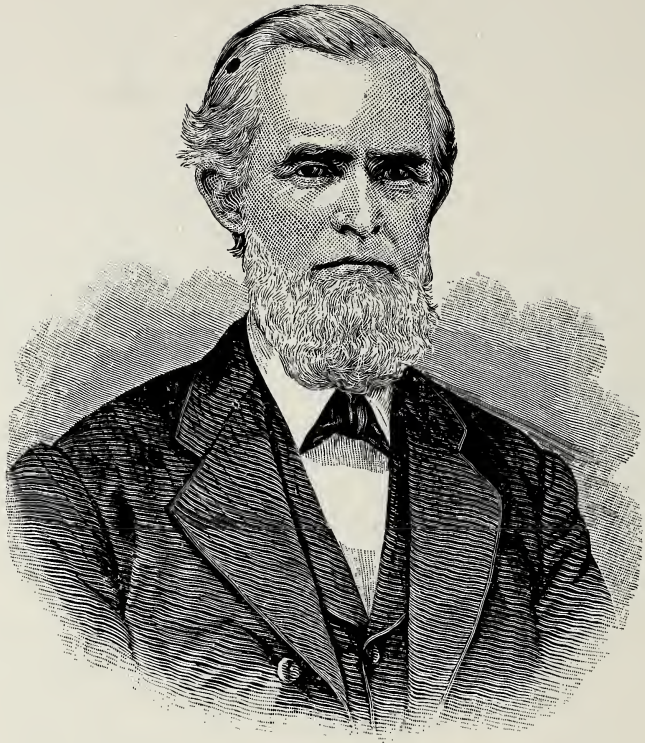
An interesting fact to state relative to the sale of the Society's publications is that the Society up to this time has realized from said sale the sum of \$352.87. This is an actual return to the Society's treasury of 14.20|100 per cent. of the

cost of the publications so far issued by the Society which was \$1772.26, that is, to say a cash return of about one-fifth of the entire publishing outlay.

A still more interesting fact would be if your Committee could at this time speak to you in a home of your own, as it had hoped to do by the time this, another annual report was to be laid before you. Earnest and hopeful effort was made during the past year towards securing a place the Society might call its own, but hoped with vain result. The Society has prospered, it has produced nearly three thousand pages of historical matter pertaining to the County of Lebanon, its people, lore and traditions of the past, it has garnered into its Library and Museum a store of precious things and mementoes, the treasured gifts of liberal givers. These treasures are, however, buried away, out of sight, and seemingly out of mind, since the month of April 1911, or nearly three years. It is discouraging.—It is more than that it is humiliating that things should be so. It is dwarfing our possibilities and opportunities as a Society, and the Society itself in the estimation of the public.

Respectfully submitted by the Executive Committee,

S. P. Heilman, Secretary.



*John. K. Kinsport*

## HON. JOHN H. KINPORTS \*

John Henry Kinports, the son of John Kinports and Barbara Huber, was born on a farm near Campbelltown, Lebanon County, Pa., Jan. 21, 1821. He was the second child in a family of seven children. Here he spent his childhood years inuring himself to the toil incident to farm life, and also his school years in acquiring what could be had only so meagerly in the schools of that period.

At the age of fifteen he entered into the service of James Bingham at Annville, who carried on a store business in a building where now stands the Washington Hotel, remaining in that service for a period of about fifteen years, characterized by faithfulness and devotion to his employer's interests, and also to laying the foundation of an honorable career for himself.

In 1851, at the early age of 30 years, he was elected Clerk of the Orphans Court and Clerk of the Quarter Session in and for the County of Lebanon, which offices at that time were combined in one, and to serve which he took up his residence in the town of Lebanon. At the expiration of that three years term of office he returned to Annville in the year 1854, and entered into partnership with Chas. H. Kilinger in carrying on a general merchandise business. Subsequently he had as a partner in that business H. H. Kreider,, and still later D. O. Shenk. During a part of these mercantile years of his, namely from 1866 to 1876, he held the honorable position of Associate Judge of the Courts of his County.

On May 5th 1842 Mr. Kinports was married to Mary Ann Stein, a daughter of Philip Stein, Esq., a prominent citizen of Annville, who at the time was engaged in the business of a

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\*This sketch of the Hon. John H. Kinports constitutes the annual report for the year ended Dec. 18, 1912, of the Society's Committee on Biography, Messrs. T. S. Stein, C. R. Lantz and H. C. Grittinger. Its non-appearance in print at that time was due to the fact that no annual number, in which number it has been the custom to publish the reports of its Standing Committees, was issued by the Society that year.

hatter, and also had served a number of years as a Justice of the Peace. Rev. Jonathan Ruthrauff, a Minister of the Lutheran Church, was the officiating clergyman. There came to them twelve children, as follows: John Henry, Geo. W., Anna (married to W. H. Miller) Barbara E., Rebecca (married to Witmer Kreider) John H., Philip, Franklin, Elizabeth, Charles, Katharine, and Heilwig, four of whom at this writing, having, however, departed this life, namely, J. Henry, John H., Franklin and Katharine.

Most of his years Mr. Kinports spent in mercantile, or general store business in the town of Annville, where, as has already been shown, he was first connected with James Bingham in that business, and later was connected with the stores of Eilenberger, Henry Horst, Jos. Shenk and others. and in which business and in which relationships he commanded by his energy and straightforward dealing, the good will of the people of his community and a foremost place in their regard, and also thereby built up a large business enterprise in his town. Two of his sons succeeded him in that business.

Although closely attentive to his mercantile business Mr. Kinports took time to interest himself in any public enterprise of his town to which he might be called to lend a helping hand, or where his judgment and means might be of service. In 1857 he was one of the incorporators of the Mutual Fire Insurance Company, of Annville, and later served on its Executive Committee. He was one of the owners of the historic Annville Academy, which in 1866 was tendered as a gift to the East Pennsylvania Annual Conference of the United Brethren Church, and thus became the nucleus of the present Lebanon Valley College, of which institution he became one of its Trustees, and in which he was greatly interested, and to which he gave financial aid in a most liberal manner.

He was a charter member, and the first President of the Annville National Bank, which was organized in 1873, and continued in that position until his death in 1893. In 1892 he aided in founding the Annville Building and Loan As-

sociation, and served as a Director. The same year the Daisy Shirt Factory, of Annville, was chartered with a capital stock of \$10,500. Mr. Kinports was its first President. In politics he was a Republican, having joined that party at its organization in 1856.

He was a life-long and consistent member of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, was constant in promoting its interests, and endeavored at all times to exemplify its religious beliefs by his Christian life and unswerving moral attitude as to all civil, business and religious affairs in which he had any part. This position led him to sever his membership in a certain fraternal order when his Church declared membership therein to be inconsistent with its ideas as to Church membership, even though he had himself aided in organizing that Order in Annville.

He was a liberal giver in his Church and a large participant in all its activities, such as Class-leader and Steward; a member of the Building Committee in the erecting of a new church in 1861; for twenty years the efficient Superintendent of its growing Sunday School, remaining afterwards its Superintendent Emeritus until his death.

Mr. Kinports departed this life March 8, 1893 at the ripe age of 72 years, 1 month and 17 days, and his earthly remains were laid at rest in the Annville Cemetery, where also were placed the remains of his widow four years later.

An estimate of the man, of his career, and its many activities, based on personal observation and acquaintanceship, is to the effect that he possessed certain traits of character which endeared him to his fellow-citizens, and caused him to be a forceful man in his community. He was a man of good judgment. This led many of his townsmen, as well as many of his friends in rural sections, to seek his counsel, not only as to ordinary daily affairs but often and more especially as to business matters of a legal and financial nature. This led to the remark at that time in vogue; "To Johnny Kinports we will go," the diminutive "Johnny" being applied by reason of the fact that he was somewhat below the average height. Diminutives like this were frequently used by the

Pennsylvania Germans rather as expressions of endearment than of ridicule, their more common meaning.

Another trait was his sterling integrity. This led him to pay all his obligations after a certain failure in business, although not legally bound to do so. He was also kind-hearted, and this with special reference to his family and relatives.

Back of these personal traits was his strong Christian character, and it was this more than anything else that gave him the strong hold he held in his community and amongst his fellow-men. Many of those surviving him find pleasure yet in bearing testimony to his many Christian virtues and these as having been strongly exemplified by him during his entire lifetime.

Although of humble birth, with none of the present day opportunities for acquiring an education and position, he became a typical and representative citizen of Lebanon County, and was such during his entire business career, and as such the Lebanon County Historical Society gladly gives place amongst its biographical records, along with those of many others already enshrined there, this memorial to the life and labors of John Henry Kinports.

# HISTORICAL EDUCATION AND HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

By HIRAM HERR SHENK, A. M.

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No doubt every member of the Historical Society has observed a new tendency in education, differing essentially from that prevailing even twenty-five years ago. Then there seemed a sharp, distinct dividing line between the age of educational training and the age of active life. The days of school age were clearly differentiated from the days of professional or vocational activity. True, High School and College boys even in this day are addressed as though they were not really living in High School and College, merely getting ready for the active duties of life. But the new note that is being sounded everywhere is that our educational training is never finished. Thus it is that we have octogenarians in our summer schools, farmers in middle life taking agricultural courses, men who have passed the half century mark eager to work in college for the Bachelor's degree, and ambitious railroad men of all ages enrolling in our Correspondence Schools.

Contemporaneous with this happy re-adjustment of our attitude toward formal educational training in general comes the refreshing change in our sense of historical values. Nearly all the teaching of history a half century ago and less, consisted of a barren recital of certain facts believed to be important but which make up merely the form of history with little of its content. Form did I say? Yes, and I might safely add only the form of political history; for culture history was not only not written but was not appreciated, was scarcely accounted worth while. Indeed only in recent times have the small facts that go to make up the real history of a people been valued at all by historians.

Dr. Edward Eggleston in his charming address on the oc-

casion of his installation as President of the American Historical Association in Boston, Dec. 1900, said: "Never was a falser thing said than that history is dead politics and that politics is living history. Some things are false and some things are perniciously false. This is one of the latter kind. In this saying Freeman expresses his whole theory of history writing, and one understands the point of Green's remark to him: "Freeman, you are neither social, literary, nor religious." A worse condemnation of a historian could hardly be made. Politics is the superficial struggle of human ambitions crossed occasionally, but rarely, by a sincere desire to do good. History must take account of politics, as of everything else, but let us remember that politics is in its very nature bold and encroaching, a part of the fierce striving for power which is so unlovely. It often sails under false colors, and it will deceive the historian unless he is exceedingly vigilant. It likes to call itself patriotism. Lincoln, all ready to carry through a great measure by means that were doubtful—this one an office, that one something else—looked at the work of his hands with disgust. "Hay," he said to his private Secretary, "what we call patriotic statesmanship is nothing but a combination of individual meanness for the general good."

The celebrated Professor Jebb thus points out the weakness of that great Greek, Thucydides: "It is a natural subject of regret, though not a just cause of surprise or complaint, that the history (by Thucydides) tells us nothing of the literature, the art or the social life under whose influence the author had grown up. Among the illustrious contemporaries whose very existence would be unknown to us from his pages, are the dramatists Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes; the architect Ictinus; the sculptor Phidias; the physician Hippocrates; the philosophers Anaxagoras and Socrates." Thus the eminent Greek historian, whose writings have been considered a model, failed to mention the most important facts and factors of the period of which he wrote.

But why study history? Following Freeman's view the answer frequently has been, to make good citizens. If by this is meant, as it sometimes is, to prepare us to use the ballot it

would have excluded girls from the study of history except in equal suffrage States or those expecting to become such. But this view of the objective in the study of history is too narrow. We ought to study history to make us better men and women, to enable us better to react upon our social environment. We should study history so that collectively we may be able to improve the race by using the facts that history gives us as the indispensable data for sociological research.

But what has all this to do with the interest in the growth and development of local historical societies. It has the relation of cause and effect. The newer history has made local historical societies a necessity. As long as the historian relied upon the annalists of the kings, or the speeches of politicians and statesmen, the Congressional Globe and the President's messages, for political history, and upon military records where available, and a patriotic imagination where the records were wanting, or unpleasantly true, history writing could be done "most any time." But when nothing is too insignificant for the trained eye of the historian, when the whole walk and conversation and even the thoughts of men and women and children have a value, history can only be written from below; at least the facts for the writing of history can be gathered only at close range. I remember some years ago in the University of Wisconsin finding a young man in that great library at work on the election returns in Illinois during the great contest of 1860. He was studying the returns from every township in southern Illinois. It seemed rather a useless task. We usually rest content to record the vote of the State as a whole. But now there appears a book entitled "The Development of American Nationality" by Professor Fish, of the above named University, in which are given maps showing how every county in the country voted in 1860. The author shows a grasp of the social, economic and political forces found in few text books, for the very conclusive reason that he is not a long-distance historian, but has built up his history on the Monographs which form the unit in the writing of history.

This demand for the new history then created the demand for Historical Societies and points the way to their mission

and to the kind of work they should do. One of the important functions of the Historical Society is the preservation of records. The historian is unable to answer many a question because the data are not at hand on which he can base a safe conclusion. We find great difficulty in taking account of stock, as it were, in the march of civilization because we are lacking in a knowledge of those acts hitherto deemed too insignificant and yet now known to be essential to a correct understanding of the forces behind moral progress.

Are we more moral than fifty years ago? than seventy-five years ago? Most persons can not answer this question with any great degree of satisfaction to their own minds. Why? Because we don't know the facts. We have skimmed the surface and have preserved superfluities rather than essentials. Have we made progress in education? We are better able to tell, because we have more concrete facts; school houses, courses of study, fewer illiterates. I recall a conversation some years ago with an intelligent aged citizen of Annville, who had a vivid recollection of the free school controversy in this county. He told me that he was boycotted for taking a stand for free schools, and he stated that even social relations were broken in that great struggle. I also recall the statement of my grandfather regarding that controversy. An illiterate voter in Derry Township, Dauphin County asked a Scotch—Irish gentleman to mark his ballot. "How do you want it marked?" asked the more intelligent of the two; "against the free schools of course" said the illiterate. "Well then I wont mark your ballot," was the rejoinder, "for you are one of those for whom this law was passed." It is such incidents, facts and conditions as those just mentioned that give us an insight into the fight for free schools in this Commonwealth. And the history of education in Pennsylvania cannot be satisfactorily written until the information now within reach in every local community shall have reached the light by means of the Monographs written by local historical societies.

But to determine whether we have made moral progress we need to record facts hitherto ignored. It is refreshing to note that Governor-elect Brumbaugh recently said that he

wanted legislation for the leisure hours of the people of this Commonwealth. This has the right ring. A man reveals himself as well if not better during his leisure hours than when he is at work. Adverse criticism for poor work, or fear of losing his position may keep an individual in the straight and narrow way, but "tell me how he spends his leisure and I will tell you what kind of a man he is." Now the local historical society should record for the future all facts regarding the leisure of the people; and it should secure all the facts regarding the use to which people in the past put their leisure hours. Where did they congregate? What were the subjects of their conversation? What did they read? To what extent were they controlled in their conduct by the church? Our lack of information along these lines has made it impossible for us to determine the extent to which education and religion prevent crime. From a conversation with a noted educator, a man of national reputation, not many months since. I reached the conclusion that there is very little reliable information on the question of education and crime, and the writings of criminologists shows that there is no definite agreement among them as to the effect of religion and crime. While it may properly be objected that in the nature of the case absolute proof is impossible in determining the relationships just suggested, we ought to be able to get nearer the truth than we do, and I make the suggestion to show how inadequately the history of the race must be written when we know that we do not know the causal facts.

Then too the local historical society renders a real service by correcting historical misstatements. For years most of our historians who alluded to the matter at all, stated that "Jim" Bowie who was killed with Travis and Crockett at the Alamo was the inventor of the "Bowie" knife, but historians who studied local history discovered that the inventor of the Bowie knife was the brother of the hero of the Alamo. The writers of fiction have taught the historian a valuable lesson in the attention paid to small facts, and indeed, John Stuart Mill remarked that Scott's novels changed the methods of historical writing in England. One has only to read carefully through the average text book on United States History to see the

need of more trained and accurate historians—men who know the facts and are not afraid to speak the truth.

In connection with the organization of historical societies in the United States the name of John Pintard appears foremost. He was a Princeton man, much interested in American history, and appreciated the need of preserving the muster rolls, literature, private and public documents, relics and other material of the Colonial period. In 1789 he urged upon the Rev. Jeremy Belknap, of Boston, the importance of organizing a society of antiquarians. He suggested that "Letters should be written to gentlemen in the east of the United States requesting them to form similar societies and a correspondence shall be kept up between them for the purpose of communicating discoveries and the improvements to each other" and concluded "When ye societies' funds can afford it salaries shall be granted to the secretaries and other officers."

In February 1791 Mr. Belknap writes that the society is named not the Antiquarian Society, but the Historical Society.

This was the beginning of the Massachusetts Historical Society. The first membership numbered 8, and was limited to 25.

Mr. John Pintard having given the inspiration for the organization of the Massachusetts Historical Society, organized in 1804 the New York Historical Society. Mr. Pintard's Library was given the Society in 1807 and formed the nucleus of a library now numbering more than 100,000 volumes.

Following the organization of the above mentioned societies there were organized societies in nearly every State and populous county in the country. In addition the American Antiquarian Society was formed in Worcester, Mass., in 1812, and in 1884 the American Historical Association was organized at Saratoga, N. Y., incorporated by Act of Congress, Jan. 4, 1889, and reports to Congress through the Smithsonian Institution.

Among the organizations not bounded by geography in,

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their researches are the American Jewish Historical Society New York, the Huguenot Society in New York, Mayflower Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, Colonial Dames, but are largely indebted to the Historical Societies for their existence.

Following is the order of the organization of a dozen or more of the earliest Historical Societies in the States.

Massachusetts .....	1789
New York .....	1804
Maine .....	1822
Rhode Island .....	1822
Pennsylvania .....	1824
Virginia .....	1831
North Carolina .....	1833
Vermont .....	1838
Kentucky .....	1839—40
New Jersey .....	1845
Alabama .....	1850
Wisconsin .....	1853

In addition the counties of Pennsylvania have their historical societies, and some of the leading churches have paid organizations for historical investigation. The growth of interest in Genealogical research has added much to our historic knowledge in the recent past. The new awakening of interest in local history as shown in the development of our historical societies proves that the dawn of a new day is at hand—a day in which history will be written at first hand. For the writing of this real history the local historical society is an absolute necessity.







